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STATE DOCUMENTS

BIENNIAL REPORT

1963-1964

STATE PARKS DIVISION

MONTANA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

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"PARKS ARE OUR LAST FRONTIER, THE BIT OF OUR NATIVE LANDSCAPE WHICH WE SHOULD PROTECT, ENJOY AND PASS ON UNSPOILED TO FUTURE GENERATIONS."

MONTANA

STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

STATE PARKS DIVISION

1963 - 1964

Hon. Tim Babcock, Governor
State of Montana
Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Members

39th Montana Legislature

Dear Governor Babcock:

We are pleased to submit the Biennial Report of the State Parks Division of the Montana Highway Commission.

The report covers the activities of the Parks Division during the current biennium and includes recommendations for the consideration of the Governor and the Legislature.

Yours very truly,

STATE PARKS DIVISION
MONTANA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

Roy L. Sorrells, Chairman
S. N. Halvorson, Vice Chairman
George Gosman
R. F. Kitchingman
J. M. Nass

Ashley C. Roberts, Director

STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

STATE PARKS DIVISION

1963 - 1964

REPORT TO GOVERNOR/LEGISLATURE

By Act of the 1953 Legislature, the State Park Commission, as such, was dissolved and the powers, duties and activities were transferred to the State Highway Commission, effective on July 1, 1953. The transfer was effected as of that date and the park system now operates as the Park Division of the State Highway Commission.

PURPOSE

During the eleven and one-half years that the Montana Highway Commission has been charged with State Park affairs, the Commission has been very much aware of the purpose for which the state park system is set up. To bring this directly to your attention we quote directly from the law:

"PURPOSE: That for the purpose of conserving the scenic, recreational, historic, scientific and archaeologic resources of this state, and of providing for their use and benefit, thereby contributing to the cultural, recreational and economic life of the people and their health, the State Highway Commission is hereby vested with the powers and duties hereinafter set forth."

It will be noted from the "Purpose" that we are to accomplish three major tasks -- namely: Conserve the scenic, historic, archaeologic, scientific and recreational resources of the state; Provide for their use and enjoyment;

and Contribute to the cultural, recreational and economic life of the people and their health. These are worthwhile objectives and deserve the very best effort we can give them.

We contend, however, that our efforts are falling far short of our current needs and most certainly the needs of the future. The American Way of Life has changed rapidly since World War II and is continuing to change every day. There has been a shift of population from the city into the suburbs. Families are increasing in size and people are living longer. There is a general feeling of crowdedness -- more people, less space.

Salaries and spending power are increasing while work time has decreased. Employees have more fringe benefits -- paid sick leaves and paid vacations -- hence more leisure time. Improved transportation and highway systems are creating greater mobility -- allowing people to travel farther for major vacations and for week-end outings.

Vacations are no longer considered luxuries ..... they are a way of life. Since World War II visitations to state parks, national parks, national forests, Bureau of Reclamation Reservoirs, Corps of Engineer Reservoirs and other public lands have more than doubled. Here in Montana we estimate that visitations have increased four or five times. This trend will continue to increase and expand several times again in the next few years.

Throughout the nation a strong interest is being shown in the recreation potential. The National Park Service has had its "Mission 66" program under way for several years. The U. S. Forest Service has had its "Operation Outdoors" program going since 1958. The Bureau of Reclamation is making more provisions for recreation at its reservoirs. The Bureau of

Land Management more recently has gone into a Multiple Use program which will permit this agency to provide recreation facilities on its land.

On September 3, 1964, Congress passed the Land and Water Conservation Act. This Act will be administered by the new Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and will provide funds, on a 50-50 matching basis, for states to Plan, Acquire and Develop recreation areas. This will be a big program and will focus more and more attention on the recreation field.

Many states throughout the nation are increasing their efforts in the recreation field. Bond issues are being passed to provide funds for acquisition of lands and the installation of facilities. Legislatures are appropriating more funds for acquisition and capital investment. Long range plans are being developed in the states for present and future recreation needs.

All of these activities reflect a national awakening to the needs and demands for outdoor recreation. More and more people are participating in recreation of all types. The resulting impact on existing recreational facilities has caused an abrupt awakening to the fact that all agencies concerned with recreation have a need for immediate development of existing areas as well as a need for long range planning to take care of future needs.

MONTANA'S ROLE

At the present time Montana has neither a long range plan nor the funds necessary to make a study or develop a plan. And yet Montana can play a key role in the over-all, nation wide recreation planning. Here we have mountains, plains, forests, streams, wilderness, historic sites, badlands ... an ideal combination of recreation values which can make Montana one of the most important vacation destinations for people from all over the country.

To the people of the more heavily crowded eastern and western states, Montana still has the open space and wilderness, the distant views over broken land, and the flavor of western history to appeal to the imagination, to provide a change of pace from routine daily living and to make a truly enjoyable vacation.

These values can be easily and quickly lost if immediate steps are not taken to provide for their preservation.

ACTIVITIES

New Parks

The 1963 session of the Legislature passed a Resolution requesting that the State Water Board make arrangements with the State Parks Division to assume the administration of the recreation activities at two of their reservoirs. A Memorandum of Understanding was worked out and the Parks Division assumed the administration at Deadman's Basin Reservoir East of Harolowton and Painted Rocks Reservoir South of Hamilton. Basic facilities have been installed at both reservoirs and they are now in operation. Additional facilities will need to be installed as rapidly as funds permit.

New facilities have been installed at Clark Canyon Reservoir and additional facilities will be installed in the spring of 1965. These facilities are being installed by the State Parks Division with funds provided by the Bureau of Reclamation. The reservoir is now impounding water and should be in full operation by the summer of 1965.

Access Roads

Improvements to access roads have been carried on at BITTERROOT LAKE STATE PARK, CANYON FERRY RECREATION AREA, HELL CREEK STATE PARK, LONE PINE STATE PARK, MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK, ROCK CREEK STATE PARK, THOMPSON FALLS STATE PARK, AND WHITEFISH LAKE STATE PARK.

Major work on the access roads was accomplished at Hell Creek and Rock Creek State Parks in cooperation with the Bureau of Sports, Fisheries & Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, Garfield County and the State Parks Division in cooperation with the Montana Highway Department.

Facilities

New sanitary facilities were placed at many of the parks in the Flathead area. Similar facilities were also placed at many of the other parks throughout the state.

New picnic tables and fireplaces were added at many of the parks.

The State Parks Division is currently working on a $47,000.00 contract for the installation of basic facilities at Clark Canyon Reservoir near Dillon. The Park Division installs the facilities and is then reimbursed by the Bureau of Reclamation.

A new boat launching ramp was constructed at Bitterroot Lake State Park. A new camping area is being developed at West Shore State Park. A well has been constructed here and the camping and parking areas are being provided.

The parking area at Lewis and Clark Caverns is being enlarged and will be able to handle double the amount of cars as in past years. If the traffic at the Caverns continues to increase we may have to again enlarge the parking area again within a few short years. A new camping area is in progress to accommodate trailers.

We have continued with the tree planting program at Tiber Reservoir. The results have been generally good and the appearance of the areas involved is considerably enhanced. Similar programs should be carried on at many of our other parks.

A new change house was constructed at Yellow Bay State Park.

Good maintenance was emphasized in all state parks.

Prison Labor Program

In cooperation with the Montana State Prison, a work camp at Lost Creek State Park was operated during the summer of 1963. The camp consisted of twelve inmates plus three guards. Tools and equipment were furnished by the Park Division and housing and maintenance were furnished by the prison. The inmates made many improvements to the park. The access road was improved, sanitary facilities were constructed, trails were cleared, overlook structures were built, and new camping and picnic areas were developed. This was a very successful venture and we hope to see a similar program carried on in future years.

Attendance

Attendance at the parks during the 1963 and 1964 seasons were the heaviest in the history of the State Parks Division. The Lewis and Clark Caverns had 63,700 paid admissions in the 1963 season ..... a 22 percent increase over the 1962 season ..... which makes this the biggest season in the history of the Caverns. The 1964 attendance dropped about 3.5% from the 1963 season, but still giving us a busy season.

In 1962 Montana State College made a study of Canyon Ferry and from their spot checks at the recreation areas, they estimated a day use that year of 100,000. We know that the use has increased each year and estimate the day use for the 1964 season at 125,000.

Exact attendance at other parks can only be estimated because we do not have entrance counters. From personal observations, from sample counts and from information passed along by our maintenance men and caretakers we know that the attendance at all parks has continued to increase each year.

All of the parks in the Flathead area have been busy and we have noted a big increase in attendance at Whitefish Lake State Park.

The parks in eastern Montana were also busy. Both Makoshika and Medicine Rocks State Parks showed increased use. Hell Creek and Rock Creek State Parks on Fort Peck Reservoir had increases. We can look for Rock Creek State Park to show big increases in future years because of the new road between Fort Peck and Highway 20. Also, the access road from the highway to the park has been completely rebuilt and is now in excellent condition.

Total attendance at all parks for the 1964 season is estimated in excess of 400,000.

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee of the State Parks Division has continued to be active. The committee now consists of twenty-four members representing the various state parks and monuments throughout the state. It is to be understood that the committee is strictly voluntary and the members serve without renumeration and attend meetings at their own expense. Generally, two meetings are held each year to review Park Division activities and to offer suggestions and comments with respect to our operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The State of Montana must embark upon an immediate program if it intends to preserve its scenic, recreational, scientific and historic sites and make them available to its own citizens as well as the many visitors we invite to visit our state each year. Such a program will require long range planning and adequate funds to carry out the task.

PLANNING

A thorough study must be made of the existing state park system with a master plan for the development of each park. This master plan will include the road system, parking areas and trails; utility systems for water supply, power distribution and sanitary facilities; adequate staffing for protection and maintenance; quarters for permanent or seasonal employees; public boat launching ramps or docks; campgrounds and picnic areas; shelter houses and change houses; concession developments; and signs including roadside exhibits. In the historic monuments, additional planning must be done for building stabilization, rehabilitation, reconstruction and for interpretation and protection.

ACQUISITION

Additional lands adjacent to existing parks are badly needed for expansion and development. Many parks show extreme over use and there is not enough available space for suitable public recreation development. Several of our parks in the Flathead Lake area are good examples of limited space and over use. Additional area in the Flathead is quite expensive and difficult to acquire, however, if any of this magnificent shoreline is to be saved for use by the public, immediate action is necessary. There are many other similar examples in our existing parks where crowded conditions are producing over use and where corrective action must be taken.

In addition to the expansion of our existing parks where needed, new parks should be added to the system expecially in the more heavily populated sections of the state where nearby recreation opportunities are limited. These parks should have good geographical distribution, should have pleasant surroundings and should be suitable for park use and development. Wherever possible they should contain an outstanding example of the scenery of that

portion of the state or should preserve unusual geologic features, or with interesting botanical associations.

Not enough emphasis has been placed on the importance of preserving Montana's historical heritage. Most of our own residents and our visitors are very much interested in the history of the West and like to visit historic sites. In the present park system, we have five historic sites that have not been properly developed, protected or interpreted. Good planning and development is urgently needed to make these places meaningful to the visitor.

There are many other historic sites in Montana which have not been preserved for posterity. Some of these should be acquired immediately before their important values are completely destroyed.

We should like to recommend the book PARKS FOR AMERICA, A Survey of Park and Related Resources in the Fifty States, and a Preliminary Plan, compiled and written by the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service and published in 1964.

STAFFING

The Headquarters Staff of the State Parks Division consists of the Director and his secretary. In order to bring the parks up to standard and also plan for the future, this staff should be increased by the addition of a qualified park planner, a permanent field supervisor with experience in park maintenance and construction, and a clerk-typist. This would allow the Director more time to devote to the overall administration of the Montana State Park system without being tied down by administrative details and field inspections over the entire state.

We recommend:

(1) That the following long range program of action covering at least a period of ten years be undertaken immediately.

(2) That advance planning be a part of the program to provide for the orderly growth and development of the state park system and each of its units.

(3) That staffing be increased to plan, develop, administer and maintain these parks so that they may continue to be an asset to the state.

(4) That each park be devloped according to plans to provide for the needs of its visitors.

(5) That land be acquired to expand the parks which already have a heavy concentration of use, to obtain lands for new parks in areas where people now have little opportunity to enjoy outdoor recreation, and to acquire important historic sites before their values are destroyed.

(6) That sufficient funds be provided to finance the planning, acquisition and development to carry on an outstanding park and recreation program that Montana will be proud of in the years to come.

THIS CALLS FOR A "PROGRAM OF ACTION":

SCHEDULE FOR TEN YEAR PROGRAM

First Two Years

1. Increase headquarters staff to implement needed long range planning. Fill Park Planner, Field Supervisor and clerk-typist positions.
2. Complete master plan studies for ten units of the existing state park system.
3. Complete general development on five pilot parks.

4. Begin land acquisition to expand existing parks.

5. Acquire four new areas for future development.

First Five Years

1. Continue state-wide planning to determine areas of need and investigate potential recreation resources to fill these needs.

2. Complete master plans for all units of the state park system.

3. Complete general development on fifteen units of the existing system including necessary land acquisition for proper development and administration.

4. Have land acquisition completed and master plan developed for a total of ten new areas.

Second Five Years

1. Fill position of Assistant State Park Director.

2. Fill additional field positions necessary to assure year-round maintenance and protection of new developments.

3. Acquire land and complete master plans for ten new parks.

4. Complete development of 15 existing parks and 10 new parks.

5. Submit report to Legislature on the accomplishments of the ten year program.

6. Submit plan to Legislature for next ten year program based on existing and anticipated needs.

At the end of the ten year program Montana should have a good system of state parks comprising at least forty units well distributed throughout the state and developed to take care of the anticipated visitor needs. These parks will consist of large, natural scenic parks, recreation areas, historic sites and scientific monuments. The headquarters staff will be sufficient to carry out an effective state park program. There will be an adequate field staff for the proper management, maintenance and protection of the state parks and their developments.

MONTANA STATE PARKS

&

MONUMENTS

NAME OF PARK	ACREAGE	LOCATION	FACILITIES
Bannack State Monument	50	21 Mi. W. of Dillon Off U.S. #91	Pic. C. Historic Site
Bitterroot Lake State Park	30	20 Mi. W. of Kalispell 5 Mi.N. of U.S.2 @ Marion	Pic. F. S. B. & C.
Canyon Ferry Reservoir	1800	20 Mi. S.E. of Helena off U. S. 12	Pic.F.S.B. & C.
Chief Joseph State Monument	160	16 Mi. S. of Chinook off U. S. 2	Historic Site Pic.
Chief Plenty Coups St. Mon.	160	37 Mi. S. of Billings near Pryor	Historic Site Pic.
Clark Canyon Reservoir	1200	20 Mi. S. of Dillon off U.S. 91	Pic. F.S.B. & C.
Flathead Lake State Park	15	15 Mi. N. of Polson on U. S. 93	Pic. F.S.B. & C.
Fort Owen St. Monument	1	At Stevensville off U.S. 93	Historic Site
Hell Creek State Park	200	26 Mi. N. of Jordan off Montana 20	Pic. F.S.B. & C.
Hooper State Park	17	At Lincoln on Montana 20	Pic. & C.
James Kipp State Park	400	65 Mi. N. of Lewis-town on Montana 19	Pic.F.B. & C.
Lewis & Clark Caverns	2770	18 Mi. E. of Whitehall on U. S. 10	Tours, Pic.C. Scenery
Lone Pine State Park	160	3 Mi. SW. of Kalispell off U. S. 2	Pic. C. & Scenery
Lost Creek State Park	400	6 Mi. N. of Anaconda Off U. S. 10A	Unusual Scenery, Pic. & C.
Makoshika State Park	784	3 Mi. S. of Glendive Off U. S. 10	Unusual Scenery, Pic. & C.

NAME OF PARK	ACREAGE	LOCATION	FACILITIES
Medicine Rocks State Park	320	12 Mi. N. of Ekalaka on Montana 7	Unusual Scenery, Pic.
Missouri River Headwaters St. Monument	9	3 Mi.E. of Three Forks & 3 Mi.N. off U.S. 10	Historic Site, Scenery, Pic. F. & C.
Nelson Reservoir	200	25 Mi. NE. of Malta	Pic. & C.
Painted Rocks Reservoir	100	40 Mi. S. of Hamilton off U. S. 93	Pic. F.S.B. & C.
Rock Creek State Park	200	35 Mi. S.of Fort Peck on E.Shore of Ft.Peck Reservoir	Pic. F.S.B. & C.
Thompson Falls State Park	25	6 Mi.N. of Thompson Falls on U.S. 10A	Pic. & C.
West Shore State Park	68	20 Mi.S. of Kalispell on U.S. 93 on Flathead Lake	Pic.F.S.B. & C.
Whitefish Lake State Park	15	3 Mi. W. of Whitefish on U. S. 93	Pic. F.S.B. & C.
Yellow Bay State Park	15	20 Mi. N. of Polson on Montana 35	Pic.F.S.B. & C.
Deadman's Basin Reservoir	250	29 Mi. E. of Harlowton off U.S.12 N.	Pic.F.S.B.
Tiber Reservoir	1500	18 Mi.S.W. of Chester off U.S. 2	Pic. F.S.B. & C.

NOTE: ABBREVIATIONS ON FACILITIES: Picnicking, fishing, swimming, boating and camping.

BUDGETS

	FISCAL YEAR 1964-1965	BIENNIUM BUDGET REQUEST	
	(ESTIMATED)	1965-66	1966-67
SALARIES AND WAGES			
Salaries	$102,500.00	$149,960.00	$157,846.00
Employee Benefits	7,500.00	11,000.00	11,525.00
TOTALS	$110,000.00	$160,960.00	$169,371.00
OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE			
Office & Field Supplies & Services	$ 7,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$17,000.00
Utilities	2,500.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Repairs, Replacements, & Operations	9,500.00	79,500.00	79,500.00
TOTALS	$ 19,000.00	$101,500.00	$101,500.00
TRAVEL			
In-State	$ 5,800.00	$ 13,650.00	$ 13,650.00
Out-of-State	200.00	2,000.00	2,050.00
TOTALS	$ 6,000.00	$ 15,650.00	$ 15,700.00
CAPITAL			
New Vehicles	$ -0-	$ 24,000.00	$ 29,000.00
Recreation Facilities, Custodial Buildings, Area Hdqtrs. Buildings, Workshop Buildings & Caverns Improvements	$ 4,000.00	$ 29,750.00	$ 37,750.00
PAYMENTS TO CONCESSIONER	$ 11,000.00	12,000.00	13,500.00
TOTALS	$ 15,000.00	$ 65,750.00	$ 80,250.00
TOTAL ALL EXPENDITURES	$150,000.00	$343,860.00	$366,821.00

Montana has the nucleus of a good state park system. We believe that the people of the state are interested in seeing this system grow and expand to the point that everyone will take pride in during the years to come. The Park Division has assumed a monumental task and is attempting to do this with a very modest budget. The available dollars have been put to work quite effectively, but an adequate budget is necessary if the Parks Division expects to carry out the basic tasks as assigned by law.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

MONTANA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

Roy L. Sorrells, Chairman
S. N. Halvorson, Vice Chairman
George Gosman
R. F. Kitchingman
J. M. Nass

Ashley C. Roberts

Ashley C. Roberts, Director
State Parks Division

"Leisure for everybody, a condition which we are now approaching, is a new thing under the sun -- the most revolutionary thing that ever happened. Here is our chance -- we may choose this way of life or pass it by."